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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Ambassador Edelman: We are worried about Kirkuk - Hurriyet
US' Kirkuk worry - Milliyet
French minister: Chirac for entry talks with Turkey - Aksam
German FM calls for a 'Yes' EU vote for Turkey - Hurriyet
Americans inspect Ercan Airport in 'TRNC' - Aksam
'TRNC' to early polls in January - Sabah
CARE official Hassan, symbol of hope, abducted in Baghdad - Aksam
Muslim votes will go to Kerry - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

Ambassador Edelman: Kirkuk a source of concern for US - Cumhuriyet
Edelman: Kirkuk a source of worry - Radikal
'TRNC' government disintegrates in 9 months - Radikal
Erdogan on persuasion tour in France - Radikal
China supports Turkey's EU membership - Zaman
US bombing of Fallujah kills a family - Cumhuriyet
US bombing wipes out a family in Fallujah - Yeni Safak
9/11 policies reduce Muslim votes for Bush to 7 percent - Zaman
Cheney: Kerry cannot prevent another 9/11 - Zaman
Cheney's 'nuclear 9/11' script - Yeni Safak
Syrian administration resists US - Yeni Safak
Putin to visit Turkey early December - Cumhuriyet
Greek volunteers may be involved in Srebrenidza massacre - Lawmaker - Radikal

BRIEFING

Ambassador Edelman on US Presidential elections, Kirkuk: US Ambassador to Turkey Eric Edelman paid a visit to Turkey's central province Kayseri to deliver a speech on the U.S. Presidential Elections at Erciyes University in the city of Kayseri, Turkish media report. Responding to a question after the lecture, Edelman said that the US was concerned by some Kurdish groups' moving Kurdish families to Kirkuk in northern Iraq. Edelman stressed that the US opposed altering the demographic balance of the region by force. He added the U.S. concerns in this regard have been made clear to the IIG and Kurdish leadership. In response to another question, Edelman noted that the US has been supporting Turkey's EU drive since 1963. US Presidential elections this year will not lead to significant changes in US-Turkey relations, he added. The two American candidates have made different promises with regard to recognition of Armenian 'genocide' claims, but such pre-election promises are usually adjusted by the realities of the office, Edelman noted. Ambassador Edelman also emphasized that Turkey is strategically very important for the US.

US officials inspect airport in northern Cyprus: Officials from the US Department of Transportation have inspected security conditions at Ercan Airport in northern Cyprus, Turkish papers report. A Turkish Cypriot official said Americans wanted to see whether Ercan Airport meets international flight safety requirements. The US had announced after the April referenda for reunification of Cyprus that it could initiate international flights to northern Cyprus, papers note.

Turkish Cypriots may go to early polls: Turkish Cypriot 'PM' Mehmet Ali Talat on Wednesday announced his resignation after a months-long political deadlock in northern Cyprus. Talat's coalition, made up of his Republican Turkish Party (CTP) and Serdar Denktas' Democrat Party (DP), lost its parliamentary majority in April, shortly after a referendum on a UN-sponsored peace plan aimed at unifying the divided island. Talat is expected to remain in power as caretaker premier. Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash asked Dervis

Eroglu, who heads the conservative National Unity Party (UBP), to form a new government. UBP is currently the biggest group in parliament with 19 seats. But Talat said that early polls would be the best way to break the deadlock. `TRNC President' Denktas has the authority to call early elections if efforts to set up a new government fail. Ankara has been careful to avoid any international reaction to what may be seen as meddling in the domestic affairs of the breakaway state in north Cyprus, "Cumhuriyet" states.

PM Erdogan visits France: PM Tayyip Erdogan is in Paris undertaking a diplomatic initiative aimed at EU countries contemplating a referendum on the issue of Turkey's future membership. Edrogon told a French daily that no referendum has been held to approve the membership of a candidate country during previous enlargements. Turkey, he said, asks for only one thing: to be treated exactly like everyone else. French President Jacques Chirac has said he favors a national referendum on Turkey's bid to join the EU. Erdogan said that organizing national referenda on Turkey's candidacy would be contrary to the principles of the EU. On Wednesday, French Finance Minister Nicolas Sarkozy said after meeting Erdogan that President Chirac had decided to give a green light to EU entry talks with Turkey. Erdogan will address the French public today on state television FR3 and private news channel LCI. He will attend a meeting of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as well. France has expressed reservations about Turkey's bid to join the European bloc.

Report on torture, democracy in Turkey: A report by the Human Rights Consultation Board of Turkey's Prime Ministry says that 692 Turkish nationals were subjected to torture in the first half of this year. The report also points to the perils of `absolute' rule of the majority party in the parliament. The document asks for a thorough inspection of irregularities in state institutions. It also advises removal of legal immunity for lawmakers. The report regards the 10-percent elections threshold as an obstacle to the establishment of democratic order in Turkey. When finalized, the report is to be submitted to PM Erdogan and FM Gul. Meanwhile, UN Special representative on human rights, Hani Jilani said some bureaucratic elements in the state apparatus were resisting to reforms in Turkey.

Oskanyan calls for Turkish-Armenian talks: Armenian FM Vartan Oskanyan, in Italy on an official visit, said that recognition by Ankara of the Armenian `genocide' was not a prerequisite for holding meetings between Armenia and Turkey. He complained that Turkey was pushing for a resolution of the Nagorno- Karabakh dispute before talks with Armenia. Oskanyan said Yerevan expected Ankara to open the border crossing between the two countries before the prospective membership talks between Turkey and the EU.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq; EU-Turkey

"Saddam Hussein's Iraq"
Zafer Atay remarked in the economic-politic Dunya (10/21): "The Duelfer report contains some very interesting connections, including Saddam's bribing some countries in order to turn the UN embargo into an ineffective sanction. Although Turkey is also mentioned in the report, other countries constitute the big chunk in terms of bribery. France apparently was bribed since 1980s for instance. . Russia also took a significant share in the looting as Russian oil companies sold cheap Iraqi oil in the domestic market at a high price and distributed the difference to Russian politicians. Some American firms and figures were also a part of Saddam's bribery and corruption list. However, the American Privacy Act prevents their names from being listed in the Duelfer report."

"A Date in 2005 is good enough"
Mehmet Ali Birand commented in the sensational-mass appeal Posta (19/21): "The most important issue is to get a date from the EU to start the negotiations. It does not matter if the negotiations start in March, July or November 2005. All we need is a definite date without any additional conditions attached or demands other than the Copenhagen criteria. There should be no further limitations that go beyond those listed in the EU Commission's Progress Report, which may be found unacceptable by the Turkish public. Let them just start the negotiations on a specific date. We may be faced with certain annoying statements included within the upcoming December 17 summit declaration. We may see warnings that say the start of negotiations does not necessarily mean full membership or call on us to mend the bilateral relations with Greece. None of these are as important as the start of negotiations. As the negotiations get underway, the dynamism inherent in such progress will take care of all the conditions or other limitations."

EDELMAN